

AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE THE LOSERS

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, today the House leadership, and we have heard it already this morning, is in the blame-shifting mode and the only losers are going to be the American people.

The majority of the Republicans say they want to save Social Security, but even under their balanced budget proposal in 7 years, they still borrow over \$100 billion from the Social Security trust fund. The Government is shutting down and we are inching closer to defaulting on our debt, and who is to blame for the disaster? The blame rests solely with the Republican majority.

The reason they need a continuing resolution and the debt limit increase is because the Republican majority failed to finish their work. As of today, only 5 appropriations bills out of 13 have been finished, and only 3 sent to the President. Instead of finishing their work, the Republican majority is saying well, Mr. President, you need to increase Medicare premiums and cut education, or we are shutting down the Government.

On September 22, the Washington Post reported Speaker GINGRICH saying, "I don't care what the price is. I don't care if we have no executive offices and no bonds for 30 days, not this time."

Well, the majority should care. The American people should not be made to pay the price for the Republican majority not doing their work.

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PRESIDENT'S HEALTH CARE TASK FORCE CALLED POLICY DISASTER

(Mr. CLINGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CLINGER. Madam Speaker, in one of his first acts after taking the oath of office, President Clinton announced the formation of the Health Care Task Force. He selected Mrs. Clinton to lead this task force and charged her with developing a legislative proposal to solve our Nation's health care problems.

I was very critical of the secret manner in which this task force operated and also the 500 outsiders who worked on it.

We now know that the task force was an unmitigated policy disaster. What we did not know was how much this rogue operation cost.

Well, now we know and it is not very pretty. The General Accounting Office reported to me last week that President Clinton's failed Health Care Task Force cost the taxpayers nearly \$14 million.

Shortly after the task force was established, the administration esti-

mated that the task force would cost less than \$100,000.

While the Clinton administration was behind closed doors planning a Government takeover of the health care industry, the taxpayers were picking up the tab.

This is just another example of the Clinton administration not being upfront with the Congress or the American people about the entire scale, scope, and cost of their taxpayer-funded activities.

It is no wonder the Clinton administration cannot balance the budget.

POSTPONEMENT OF PRIVILEGED RESOLUTION IN SPEAKER'S ETHICS CASE

(Mr. JOHNSTON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOHNSTON of Florida. Madam Speaker, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. PETERSON] has preceded me to explain what and why our actions are changed today.

We had planned to offer a privileged resolution today calling on the House Committee on Standards and Official Conduct to report to the full House on the status of their investigation of ethics complaints filed against Speaker GINGRICH as well as their decision with respect to appointing outside counsel in this matter.

In light of the profound problems we face today, it is our decision to hold our resolution until the national crisis has subsided.

But we are no less committed to seeing it through to fruition and we will resume our efforts as soon as possible.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN HURTS ORDINARY AMERICANS

(Mr. RUSH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RUSH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in utter amazement. The complete disregard of the interests of the American people by the Republican majority is appalling.

Federal workers, the people who elected us, should not be sacrificed as pawns for the Republican agenda. The Republican majority is hell bent on achieving its ends no matter what the sacrifice is—including the livelihood of those who have chosen to serve this Nation. This is not about balancing the budget—it is about back room deals for special interests.

Seniors, working families, students, and the poor have been silenced during this GOP budget process. If the Republicans are not willing to listen to ordinary Americans, then who do they listen to? Might it be big business and special interests? In case you have not figured it out by now—the shutdown of the U.S. Government is an indication of where the Republican majority's interests lie.

It is quite telling that the Republican majority is willing to give a tax break to the wealthiest Americans, yet they are not willing to avert a Government shutdown that will hurt thousands of working class families.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle often assert that the people voted for change last November. However, I doubt this was the kind of change they had in mind.

CHANGING THE CULTURE IN WASHINGTON

(Mr. HAYWORTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HAYWORTH. Madam Speaker, I listened with great interest to my good friend from Illinois. He said, "Federal workers, the ones who elected us, do not want to see the Government closed down."

There are a lot of dedicated governmental employees. I do not doubt that for a second. But the fact is there is a special interest at work here. It is the special interest of those who always ask us to tax and spend and take more of your money to run a bigger and bigger and bigger Federal Government.

All the other issues are misdirected. All the other issues are to take you away from the central defining question that we are to decide today or in the days to come. That is, do we want to fundamentally change the culture of tax and spend in Washington?

President Clinton said time and again on the campaign trail, he was for a balanced budget. My good friends on this side of the aisle say time and again, "Well, sure we want to balance the budget, but no."

No ifs, and, or buts. No excuses. It is time to change the culture of tax-and-spend, time to balance the budget, and we intend to do exactly that.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES TO RECEIVE PAID VACATION

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DOGGETT. Well, the Democrats are tax-and-spend and the Republicans can run Government on the cheap because they are not really for all these Government employees.

How, Madam Speaker, do they propose to do it this week? Well, they are going to give 800,000 Federal employees a paid vacation. Yes, that is right. Today and until they resolve this crisis and get back to the reality of America, they are going to pay 800,000 Federal employees to do absolutely nothing.

That is the kind of good business sense they have brought to this Government, when they could not pass the appropriations bills because of all their squabbles between the far right and the not-so-right in the Republican Party.

Who is going to pay for this nonsense? The American taxpayer. They are not going to save one dime this